



VOLUNTEERS POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the processes that Altona Primary School will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

DEFINITIONS

Child-related work: work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional contact with children that is incidental to the work.

Closely related family member: parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, stepparent, parent/carer's mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.

Volunteer worker: A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work without payment or reward.

School work: School work means:

- Carrying out the functions of a school council;
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school;
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council;
- Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten;
- Attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support.

This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Altona Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers.

At Altona Primary School we aim to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for our students, staff and resources;
- Establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage volunteers, while not compromising the open and inclusive nature of our school.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Altona Primary School's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

Becoming a volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are requested to:

- discuss their interest with the relevant teacher (classroom, specialist) or a member of the Leadership Team;
- indicate their interest on documents sent out by classroom teachers;



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- discuss with the Friends & Families Committee and/or indicate their interest on documents sent out.

Working with students

Altona Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/other events and programs.

To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, **Altona Primary School** is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working With Children Check (WWCC), proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Altona Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWCC and produce their valid card to the office for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school are required to have a WWCC if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised;
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with any school event such as excursions, swimming and camps regardless of whether their own child is participating or not;
- **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not;
- **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member or not.

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for example, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications). Proof of identity may also be required in some circumstances.

Non child-related work

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child related. For example: volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, parent committee coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

At Altona Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWCC.

Management and supervision

All volunteers during school hours are required to report to the office prior to undertaking any activity within the school. They are required to sign in and wear a lanyard displaying their WWCC identification at all times. The school will provide a lanyard and a copy of the WWCC if not provided by the volunteer. At the end of their visit, visitors must report to the office and sign out. This process will be published in school communications.

Volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to follow our school's Child Safety Policy / Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and our Child Safety Code of Conduct. The principal has the discretion to make a decision about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at Altona Primary School.

Altona Primary School will provide any appropriate induction and/or training for all volunteer workers. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and/or training is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer will be engaged in.



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All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Altona Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed. The school's emergency management procedures will ensure that volunteers within the school during school hours at the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and be appropriately catered for.

Compensation

Personal injury

Volunteer workers are covered by the Department of Education and Training's Workers Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.

Property damage

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister (or delegate) may authorise such compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the Department's Legal Division.

Public liability insurance

The Department of Education and Training's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work is legally liable for:

- a claim for bodily injury to a third party
- damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related School Policies

- Visitors Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Child Safety Reporting and Responding Policy
- Duty of Care Policy

Related DET Resources

- [Working with Children Suitability Check](#)
- [WWC Suitability Flowchart](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Contractor and Volunteers OHS Management](#)

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school accountability requirements, and/or in response to any incident in regard to volunteers on the school grounds, and/or if circumstances and regulations change.

Minor changes updated on 15/3/2021